Rome, May 2, 2016

To all Major Superiors, Regionals and of Delegations

All of us are aware of the tragic earthquake, which a zone of Ecuador suffered. David de la Torre sscc sent the following letter in which he explains the present situation and especially about La Concordia where a community of the SSCC lives. David even handedly presents what needs to get taken care of and asks for economic help.

*The **General Government** considered that this request is within the scope of the past General Chapter in Numbers 15-17 of the Document "The system of Contributions and Congregational Financial Solidarity". It is up to the whole of the Congregation to respond to this appeal.*

Quito, April 27, 2016

Dear Brothers of the Congregation

Since Saturday April 16 at 6:58 p.m. our country, Ecuador has lived through one of the greatest seismic catastrophes in our history. The earthquake was 7.8 on the Richter scale. The aftershocks, shaking the ground, have not let up. This natural disaster left, according to official reports, 655 dead, 17,638 gravely hurt, 29,067 displaced and places where 70% of the residential infrastructure has collapsed. The damage directly affects six provinces. The more impacted areas are **Manabí** and **Esmeraldas**. **La Concordia** lies right in the geographic center of these two provinces. Our Congregation has been present there for 45 years. We administer the parish and we have a school for 450 children and youth of the surrounding areas.

With no let up, from the moment that this dramatic situation touched our lives, we have done whatever was possible to act out the mercy of God in all the places in Ecuador where we are.

In the first phase, we have gone to help afflicted towns directly providing water, and medications to the victims of the earthquake. From our parishes and apostolates, we have contributed, sending many tons of help, which had been channeled throughout the local church. We have seen in the whole country an outpouring of solidarity and many touching attempts to alleviate the pain and the suffering of the victims. Over the images of the disaster, (almost the total destruction of cities such as Pedernales, Manta, Portoviejo) the moving images of the 113 rescued alive from below the rubble were superimposed, images of the thousands of volunteers who with time running out, have stayed trying to save lives and of the long lines of men and women who came to leave donations in the parishes and collection points in the cities of the country. This initial period is coming to an end. We all know that, once the commotion of the moment is passed, the victims will no longer be a news item. Nonetheless, their needs will remain and increase.

In the sector of **La Concordia** the earthquake seriously damaged 140 dwellings. 40 houses need to be completely demolished. Today, there are three camps for the homeless with about 400 persons in total and it is foreseen that the number will rise because of the proximity of La Concordia to Manabí the most affected province, and family bonds between the population of this zone and there.

The **parish church** of La Concordia had irreparable structural damage, which will oblige us to knock it down completely. Together with the diocese of Santo Domingo, the Christian community and the city hall, we have the responsibility to raise up this church building from the rubble.

A third need less dramatic but equally important is to replace the computer center of the school which was completely destroyed and to repair some cracked walls in the school building itself.

This situation so close to us, to our mission, to our presence in this sector, leads us to indicate *three areas of action where our help is urgent:*

1. Construction of 50 temporary houses at $2000 = $ 100,000
   http://hogardecristo.org.ec/campanas/fondos-para-viviendas-emergentes/
2. Contribution of 20% of the estimated value of the reconstruction of the church building = $ 60,000
   (In time, the diocese will handle 50%, the Christian community 30%. The city will contribute by facilitating the permits and waving taxes and fees.)
3. Replacement of the computer center at the school and repair of the building = $ 30,000

Total: $ 190,000

We have marked 10% of the sale of the property of Santa Anita ($29,000) to get our action going. Also, we have begun an intense campaign from our other works and parishes to direct all help in this direction. However, it is obvious that with the extent of the damages so great, we alone cannot meet our goals.

In these days, various brothers of different countries have insistently asked how they can help to alleviate the pain and suffering of our families and what can we do as a religious family. By this letter in the name of my brothers, **I ask the help of the Congregation** to bring this project to completion.

We commit ourselves as soon as possible to implement a web site to periodically inform you of the amount of donations received and how they are being spent; moreover, there will be an accounting of the human and social impact of the said projects.

I thank you for whatever you can do and above all, I commend the future of Ecuador to your personal and communal prayers.

David de la Torre sscc
Viceprovincial Superior of Ecuador

All the economic aid**, which the Provinces, Viceprovinces, regions and delegations care to share, **will be channeled through the Econome General.

Please get in contact with Fr. Raja Sebastian sscc:

economo.generale@ssccpicpus.com

38th General Chapter, Document: "The system of Contributions and Congregational Financial Solidarity".

15. The General Government, through the General Econome, will be responsible for receiving requests for aid from major and regional governments and will decide best how to call on the financial solidarity of the whole Congregation to respond to these requests.

16. The community receiving aid will send a report on how the money was used to meet the objectives of the funded project.

17. The General Government will report on any projects helped through Congregational solidarity (through INFO, www.ssccpicpus.com, etc.).